

POLTERGEIST MOTHER SUES 500 PEOPLE!

Battle rages over the death of a child star

TRAGIC child star Heather O'Rourke's mother has filed a medical-malpractice law suit against 500 people — as well as the hospital where the little girl died.

Heather, whose final film, *Poltergeist III*, opened in the U.S. last month, died four months ago, at the age of 12.

Now her mother, Kathleen O'Rourke, has decided it's time to go after the people who she claims made a wrong diagnosis of her daughter's illness.

Kathleen filed the law suit against Kaiser Permanente Hospital in San Diego and 500 other unnamed defendants.

She claims that they had treated Heather since her birth, and yet failed to properly diagnose the young star's condition.

Los Angeles attorney Sanford Gage says the amount of money asked for will be determined either at trial or by settlement.

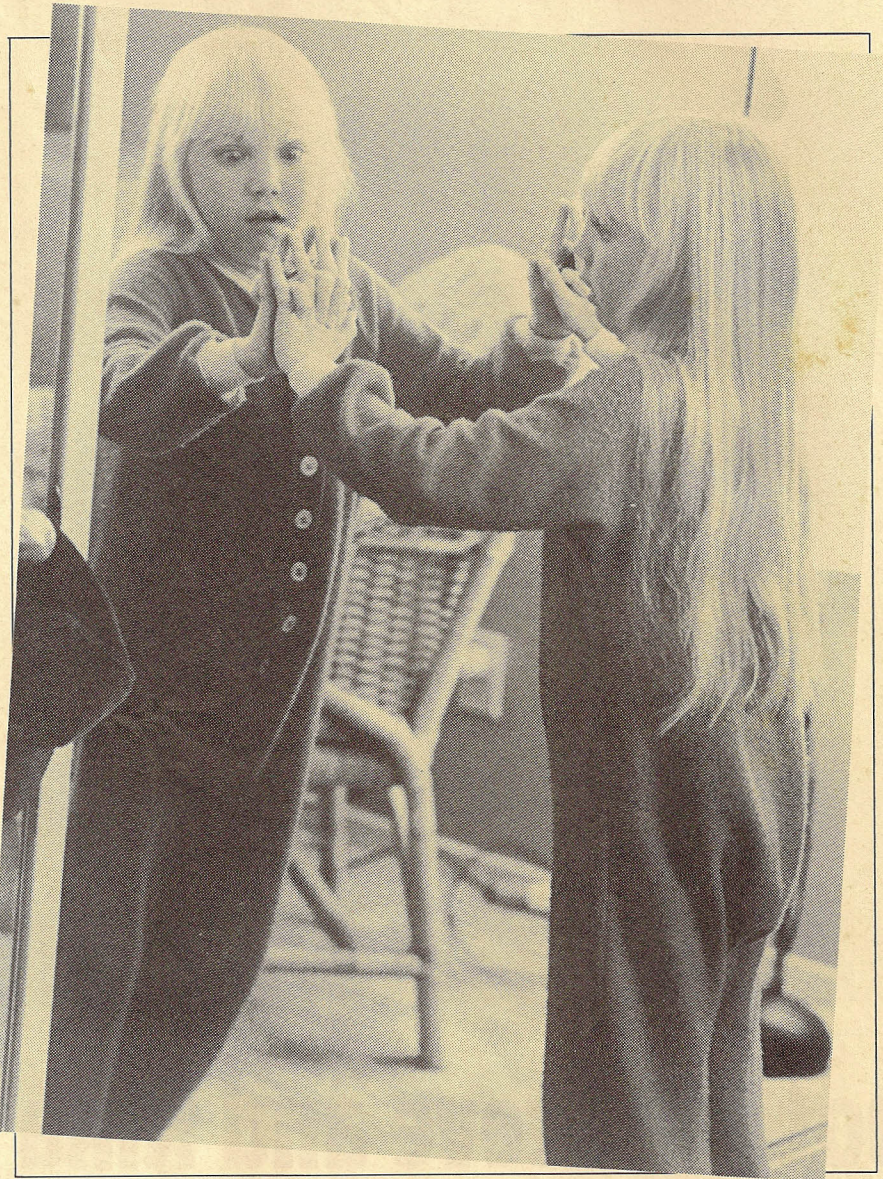
Gage says: "Heather's doctors told the family over a year ago that there was evidence the child had Crohn's disease (an intestinal inflammation that can be treated with drugs).

"But they had studies that showed the condition was really not Crohn's disease.

"In fact, Heather had a congenital bowel obstruction, which was the direct cause of her death."

Heather had been displaying symptoms of her condition for more than a year. After doctors prescribed drugs for two months, Heather was told she was well enough to go to Chicago to film *Poltergeist III*.

But even there she was under constant medical care. Doctors ordered more X-rays, which indi-



cated Heather might have a bowel obstruction.

The law suit states that if a proper diagnosis of "acute bowel obstruction" had been made in the beginning, Heather would be alive and well today.

The suit also asks for damages for the emotional distress that Kathleen suffered while she watched her daughter die.

She "personally observed the symptoms suffered by Heather,

● Heather O'Rourke comes face to face with terrifying forces just beyond the looking-glass in MGM's *Poltergeist III*.

including the cyanic blueing of Heather's fingers and toes, and the gross distension of Heather's stomach," court papers say. "Kathleen further witnessed Heather collapse on the floor in severe distress."

*From Janeen Weiss
in Los Angeles*